

VLR - 6/15/76
NRHP - 11/21/76

20 5088

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Chester Presbyterian Church (Preferred)
AND/OR COMMON
Chapel of Chester Presbyterian Church

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Northeast corner of intersection of
Osborne Road and State Route 10
CITY, TOWN Chester
STATE Virginia
VICINITY OF Third (David E. Satterfield, III)
COUNTY Chesterfield
CODE 51
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
CODE 041

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Hanover Presbytery - Executive Offices
STREET & NUMBER
1205 Palmyra Avenue
CITY, TOWN Richmond
STATE Virginia
VICINITY OF
23227

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Chesterfield County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN Chesterfield
STATE Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey
DATE
1976
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
CITY, TOWN Richmond
STATE Virginia
23219

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE 1954
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Chester Presbyterian Church is an elementary expression of American Gothic Revival architecture. The wood-frame structure measures 20 by 30 feet and is covered by a steeply pitched gable roof with relatively deep, unornamented eaves. When originally constructed, the church was located on the east side of Winfree Street at the intersection with Gill Street in Chester, approximately one-fourth mile from the present location. It was moved intact to the new site in 1954 in order to stand adjacent to a new church begun by the congregation that year and completed in 1956. The move resulted in the current concrete-block foundation being substituted for the original one of stone. The simple gabled belfry, blown off by high winds in 1948, was reconstructed following the move, and in it was hung a bell formerly used in a Seaboard Air Line Railroad steam locomotive.

The diminutive structure is but three bays deep with the three windows on each side hung with six-over-six sash. The top of each window is pointed in an attempt to suggest a Gothic arch, with the top panes shaped accordingly. Capping each window is a panel cut in the form of the top of a lancet arch, in the center of which is an applied wooden star. Two smaller pointed windows lacking the lancet panels are situated above the main entrance, and between them is an unornamented round panel suggesting a rose window. A wide lancet arch is used for the main entrance, and filling it is a pair of vertical-board doors. A set of modern brick steps with iron railings ascends to the entrance.

The church's interior finish originally consisted of wide pine boards for both flooring and walls. The walls have been plastered and the floor is now carpeted. A choir loft is in the rear of the space and the original rostrum dominates the front. The church retains its original wooden pews, nine on either side of a center aisle. Louvred interior shutters shade the side windows. Conventional lighting and heating have been installed since the relocation.

The church's setting in a grove of pine trees is scenically pleasant, and were it not for the modern foundations it would hardly be apparent that the building has been moved. Behind the church is the modern Chester Presbyterian Church, an unobtrusive Colonial-style structure in quiet taste.

CCL

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1880

BUILDER/~~ARCHITECT~~ T. Martin Grove

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Reconstruction was not exclusively a period of humiliation and bitterness for Virginia; many incidents occurred that softened resentment between Northerners and natives of the Old Dominion. The simple, Gothic Revival-style Chester Presbyterian Church, the oldest religious structure in the community of Chester, stands as a symbol of the numerous minor occurrences that served to heal the wounds of a divided nation. Organized in 1878 by a group of Northerners, the church brought former enemies together through worship in a common faith.

The origins of the Chester Presbyterian Church are more worldly than godly. About ten years after the close of the War Between the States, a rumor was circulated in the North that General Benjamin Butler had buried a military chest containing \$80,000 when he was forced to evacuate eastern Chesterfield County in 1864. The location of the chest was supposed to be in the vicinity of Chester Station (now Chester) near the base of a large pine tree. Inspired by the hope of finding the fortune, some six or more Northern families moved to Chesterfield County and began buying up land, preferably that with pine trees. Once settled, the families determinedly probed their property, but unfortunately the only solid material they struck was rock.

Besides being fortune seekers, the newcomers were faithful Christians, primarily Presbyterians and Congregationalists. However, not only was there no church of their denomination in Chester, but the one house of worship there, a Methodist chapel, held services barely once a month. The families thus were forced to repair to either Petersburg or Richmond for satisfaction of their spiritual needs, an activity that soon proved to be an expensive proposition. As a result, the Northerners set about organizing a church to serve not just themselves but the entire community. The "Presbyterian Church of Chester, Virginia" thus was formally organized in 1878 as part of the Hanover Presbytery.

The name most remembered in the formation of the church is T. Martin Grove, one of the seekers of Butler's chest, who came from Batavia, New York around 1877 bringing with him his parents, his brother Charlie, and Charlie's wife and two children. After two years of fruitless searching, Grove's family returned to New York. Although financially destitute, Grove (who had since married) elected to remain and continue his participation in the establishment of the church. Perhaps it was a sense of guilt, about opportunity seeking in a war-ridden land, that brought out in Grove a feeling of penitence. In any case, for a year he labored almost single-handedly, with no pay, building the simple wooden church. The church was dedicated November 9, 1880 with Dr. Moses D. Hoge of the prestigious Second Presbyterian Church of Richmond conducting the service. Music was provided by a melodeon, the

* SEE Continuation Sheet #1

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CONTINUATION SHEET

#1

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

gift of the Presbyterian Church of Phelps, New York. On the Tuesday following the dedication, T. Martin Grove, his work completed, moved back to New York.

Except for a period of two years when it was vacant, the church served the community until its congregation outgrew it in 1954. In that year a site for a new church was selected (ironically in a grove of pine trees), and the present church structure was erected. Affection for the little wooden building remained strong, however, and it was moved intact to the new site to be preserved. Today it stands as a fond and familiar landmark for the community of Chester and is used for weddings, social functions, and meetings.

Architecturally, the Chester Presbyterian Church is a typical example of the scores of wooden churches erected throughout Virginia in the late nineteenth century that exhibited the influence, in highly modified form, of the Gothic Revival movement. It illustrates how local builders employed Gothic motifs in a most simplified version to give their otherwise austere buildings a "religious" aspect.

CCL

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Burkley, Phyllis and Polly Fisher. "Chester Presbyterian Church," The Independent Virginian, Chesterfield, Virginia, April 26, 1972.

Unpublished research material in Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Archives.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY One acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	2,8,4,6,6,0	4,1,3,7,2,8,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE

May, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

221 Governor Street

TELEPHONE

804-786-3143

CITY OR TOWN

Richmond

STATE

Virginia-23219

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Junius R. Fishburne, Jr., Executive Director
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE JUN 15 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

ATTEST

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DIVISION OF MINERAL RESOURCES
JAMES L. CALVER, STATE GEOLOGIST

CHESTER QUADRANGLE
VIRGINIA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (1969)
SW/4 BERMUDA HUNDRED (1969)

5558 IV NW
(DREWRY'S BLUFF) | RICHMOND (STATE CAPITOL) 12 MI. | 25'

RICHMOND U.S. 1 & 301 11 MI.
4.8 MI. TO INTERCHANGE 7
287 | 2 320 000 FEET

USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale 1:24000)
Chester, Va. 1969

CHESTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, CHESTERFIELD CO.
UTM References:

A - 18/ 284660/4137280

